

**Portland – Milwaukie Light Rail Project
Milwaukie Monthly Meeting
Monday, February 27, 2011
Milwaukie Community Meeting Room
3200 SE Harrison
6:00 pm**

Staff in attendance:

City of Milwaukie

Kenny Asher, Community Development and Public Works Director

Wendy Hemmen, Light Rail Design Coordinator

Jeanne Garst, Administrative Supervisor

City Councilors

Joe Loomis

TriMet

Simon Cooper

Jim Abramson, Contractor

Claudia Steinberg

Tony Foster, Contractor

Residents in Attendance:

Ray Bryan

David Ashenbrenner

Ora Baker

Cindy Miguel

Introductions and Agenda Overview

Kenny opened the meeting.

He talked about changes in project. It is moving into the construction phase. The project design is mostly determined. The City looks at the construction as temporary and design is forever. There is likely to be more disruption during this phase and will generate more participation by the public. The City's role is moving into a support role for TriMet's construction. Wendy will be involved in overseeing the construction in the field.

Kenny. Asked how do we want to shift the format of this meeting?

David A. Update what is happening between monthly meetings, such as street closures and activity at specific locations. Let people know areas to stay away from. He wants to know about any problems that crop up.

Cindy M. We can use this as a time to get information out to the neighborhoods. It can provide creative ideas about what people can do to make this process better and meet the emotional needs of the neighbors. She suggested that the neighbors might be able to do some volunteering. How can the City show

a caring role? Maybe there could be a marquee sign. What can we do as a City to add to the project's success? Having the neighbors be part of the process would help.

Ray. He likes what others have said. Knowing what is on the schedule is important. He would like TriMet to share what they are doing behind the scenes. He would like the citizens to be able to lobby for anything that is still up for discussion. He thinks the project is being fiscally responsible. Downsized parking garages will have the biggest impact on the neighborhoods.

Ora. He has missed a couple of meetings. How will Milwaukie pay for their part?
Kenny. We will talk about that later tonight.

Kenny. He wants this to be the citizen's meeting. Over the last year we transitioned the meeting format away from staff presentations to talking around the table. Now it needs to have TM at the wheel. We are doing this to improve the City. It may be 2020 before people in Milwaukie are comfortable with light rail.

Claudia. She likes what everyone has to say. She used the Interstate Line as an example of what could be done. The CAC for that project worked through the construction part of the project. They sat around the table talking about what is happening and areas of concern. She likes the idea of volunteering. Having the citizens sharing the information works the best. She sees a monthly meeting continuing. There will also be an army of information going out. The website is an excellent source of information. E-mail is the best way to share information. The construction team meets weekly – Wendy meets with them.

TriMet has met with Waldorf and Spring Creek Apartments.

Ray. If people sign up for updates will they get information for different areas of the project?

Claudia. People can sign up for specific areas of interest. They can sign up for e-mail alerts for when things are happening. The field office is in Milwaukie. There could be a meeting in a local coffee shop from 7:00-8:00 for people to drop in and ask questions.

Tony. They will be doing web updates. People can't always get out on the site so having updates on the website is critical.

Claudia. She can connect people with whoever they need to talk to.

David. He recommended Milwaukie's Farmer's Market for doing updates. It could be done on the weekends that the City doesn't do a booth. We need to have Milwaukie involved to be sure that the things we have fought for happen.

Jim A. It is about keeping people informed.

Claudia. It is difficult to figure out when the private utilities will be getting out of the way. Sometimes the private utilities give out information that is not always accurate. She is the person to contact if there are problems. They meet with the utilities every week.

Kenny talked about the progression of the meetings in response to the changes in the project. He asked people to think about what they want from the meeting. If there aren't gaps in the project maybe we don't need to use this meeting to talk about that.

Cindy M. This is a good way to find out what is happening in areas of the project that don't directly affect people.

Claudia suggested moving the meetings to the field office.

Items to discuss tonight:

Ray – the ped-bridge

Construction Schedule (Claudia)

The project construction is proceeding. Describe what people will see happening in May, June, July, etc

Claudia had some handouts. She handed out a drawing of the Tacoma area and an updated project schedule.

The next open house will be more general – it will cover the whole alignment. It will be on March 7 at Milwaukie High School.

Tony reviewed the sections of the project. It is broken down into specific areas. D-1 is the industrial area. D-2 is downtown as far as SE Adams. D-3 is the bridge and south to Park Ave. Dave asked to have the areas shown on the large map.

The utility work is started in downtown.

They will start in D-1 in early spring doing utility work. Then track relocation will start in the north industrial area. They will have to relocate the existing Portland Western tracks to the west to make way for the light rail tracks. The UP mainline will remain the same.

Kenny asked about the finish on the walls in that area.

Tony said they would be doing that. The large fill walls will be wire and filled until the walls have settled before the finished face is put on.

D-2 work will be cleaning up the track area into downtown. Walls along the hillside will be built this summer along with the utility work.

Ora asked about how the grading will be done at crossings.

Tony said that it will remain the same. Work will have to start a long way back from the intersections to create the appropriate grades.

Ora asked about access to the apartments and old house behind Waldorf.

Claudia said there will be a new driveway that will combine the two properties. Tony. That will start early this summer.

Ora asked about the sewer line along Monroe.

Simon. All pipes are being replaced at all intersections.

Tony. It will only impact one intersection at a time. It will take a while to get through the City. There will be earth work [with trucks] to remove some of the land to build walls. There will be flaggers.

Why are they waiting until June?

Tony. Schools will be out by then. They will be in the area when school starts in the fall but with less impact.

David. Is it their intent to do only the utilities this summer and will the street improvements and track be laid later? What will the condition of the road be during that time?

Tony. They will be paving it with a temporary patch [cold patch].

Wendy. Simon should talk about the downhill grades.

Simon. There will be fill dirt during construction. They will rebuild crossings with the project including existing rail lines.

Ora asked about work on Monroe this year.

Tony said they would be doing utility work. No track construction.

D-3 will be a work bridge construction in the summer. There will be some staging in the 'triangle' site and Kronberg Park. Pile driving needs to be done this summer. There will be two abutments that require pile driving. Work will continue in the winter but won't be as visible. Next summer they will be working on the bridge.

David asked when Adams would be closed permanently.

Ora said the property owner did not want to do needed upgrades to the post office building [there needs to be air conditioning for the PO]. He said that building may be going away.

The south downtown area and bridge area will start this summer. Some trees will come out in the fall. The main clearing will start next fall. There will be some large retaining walls along the Trolley Trail that they need to start soon. The drill shaft area is large. There is a small relocation of the sewer lines until the abutments area built.

Wendy. PGE has all their permits for their work in the Island Station area.

Construction work will last until 2014.

In the summer of 2013 downtown will be put back together in its finished form.

Claudia said they need to talk about parking for construction workers.

Tony. The Tacoma P&R area will be used for parking; by the Holman building; and in the ODOT yard area. They will transfer workers into the areas being worked on and take them out at the end of the day.

There is mitigation for trains only, not for construction. Claudia is starting to meet with people along the alignment.

Field Office

The construction people are moving into the front office next week. The warehouse is ready to move into – TriMet won't be there for a couple of months. The whole construction team for the east side will be there. There may be some construction trailers in some areas.

Tacoma station area work is starting soon.

They are creating a new concrete structure for the Crystal Springs culvert by the East Moreland Golf Course.

Parking impacts

Ray. The larger park and ride size is an add-back so they don't know if that will happen. There is a pilot parking permit program being looked at on Monroe.

David. Is the planning on the structure stopped, or is the design of the structure still being looked at?

Simon. There was a preliminary design that is not being advanced at this time. The first two floors will be built.

Pedestrian Bridge

Ray. Everybody likes it but if it doesn't get built with this project it is likely it won't happen. They were looking for grant opportunities. Are there people still working on that?

Kenny. Transportation funding sources are limited. The City is watching it as is TriMet staff. There is no place to go 'stake out' the funds. There is a condition of approval that TriMet has to look for money. There is hope that the project can find some money for it. Project staff has worked so hard for the match money and there isn't a lot of extra money out there. The opportunity for funding this is not driven by the schedule – it could be added in later.

Wendy. Having it as part of the project is more affordable.

Tony. It would be best to go in before the girders for the bridge go in. The construction will be there until 2014 and it could possibly go in as late as that time.

David. Is the design for the bridge done?

Claudia. Nothing more than designing the bridge to accommodate it has been done. Structural engineers have looked at it – but it is not designed. The trusses are designed to hold it up.

Cindy. Does it save money to design the bridge without the ped-bridge?

Tony. It won't make any difference.

Kenny. There is so little federal money for transportation grants or infrastructure these days. There is a battle in Wash DC about how much should be spent on transportation around the country.

Claudia – Describe process for bird/animal nest/habitat disruption

Claudia talked about the effect of removing trees and vegetation on migrating birds. They have a biologist looking for nests. The biologist is from the Federal Gov't program and he is keeping birds from nesting in the area. The local birds are not endangered and are not a part of the process of keeping birds from nesting. He will take down active nests. There is a timeframe to keep them from nesting.

Cindy asked about getting some information about the person doing this.

Claudia. He may even be able to meet with neighbors in the Island Station area.

Lights along the line

How the lights will shine into neighborhoods is being looked at. They have hired someone to do tests to see what the impact is. He is looking at glare from cars and from the trains. They are continuing to look at it. The study is supposed to be done this week. It will be presented at the next Safety & Security meeting. It is based on fixed lighting on the train. There is a cyclops light on the train. It inhibits fatalities of people walking on the tracks.

Kenny. We will share the report when we get it.

City Updates

Funding

The Federal government has done everything but sign the match for 750M for this project. The first 85M is due in a couple of months. The government will be funding at 50%.

Ora. Does that mean jurisdictions will have to pay more?

Kenny. Milwaukie and Clackamas County won't be paying any more.

Kenny. The project scope was reduced. There is now an add-back list.

Kenny. There are four other projects that are getting new-starts funding in this current budget.

If the County or Milwaukie doesn't pay their portion it would be 60M from the project as the Federal government matches what we raise. Both the County and the City have petitions being circulated to stop those payments.

The money is due 60 days after the full funding grant agreement with the FTA is signed. The City is working on a payment plan with TriMet. What in-kind credits there would be has not been determined.

Ray. Can a vote of the people change a commitment that has been made?

Kenny. Contract law will prevail. Contracts are binding and can't just be undone. TriMet can take the County and City to court to get the money.

Cindy met with Les Poole about the funding and if it can be undone by a vote. There is no known precedence for that being done.

Kenny. This project was in the President's budget this year and has 100M funding for next year's budget. The full funding agreement is going through Congress right now. The line will be built – the question is now what the quality of the project will be.

David. Is the City still working with TriMet on the funding?

Kenny. There has to be a decision soon.

Art Committee Update

There are 12-15 candidates for the Park Ave art. The art committee will select 2-3 people to present art proposals. There will be some public meetings to get public input. Selection of the artists will be made in March. There is a 4/18 meeting to present ideas to the public. The concept proposal is due on 6/20. The final design proposals are due on 9/16.

Upcoming Meetings

March 7 – Open House

March 16 – CAC

March 19 – Monthly Meeting